

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 LA PAZ 06799 271637Z

ACTION ARA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY LA PAZ

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6860

INFO AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

AMEMBASSY LIMA

C O N F I D E N T I A L LA PAZ 6799

LIMDIS

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PBOR, PDIP, PGOV, OVIP, BL, CI, PE

SUBJ: GOB REQUEST THAT PRESIDENT CARTER HOLD JOINT MEETING
WITH PRESIDENTS BANZER, MORALES AND PINOCHET

REF: LA PAZ 6798

1. EMBASSY SEES CONSIDERABLE MERIT TO THE GOB'S
SUGGESTION THAT PRESIDENT CARTER USE HIS GOOD OFFICES IN
SUGGESTING A MEETING OF THE PRESIDENTS OF CHILE, PERU AND
BOLIVIA. SUCH AN INITIATIVE WOULD BE CONSISTENT WITH OUR
POLICY OF ENCOURAGING PEACE IN THE REGION AND DISCOURAGING
ARMS RACES AND LARGE-SCALE ARMS PURCHASES. THE PSYCHOLOGICAL
CLIMATE, GIVEN THE OCCASION OF THE CANAL AGREEMENT,
WOULD BE PROPITIOUS FOR A FRIENDLY MEETING AND BE SUPPORTED
BY OTHER L.A. COUNTRIES. ALSO, PERU'S ECONOMIC SITUATION
AT THIS TIME MIGHT ENCOURAGE PERU TO SLACKEN ITS POLICY
OF ARMS ACCUMULATION. WHILE THIS MIGHT IMPLY GIVING UP
ANY REVANCHIST GOALS PERU MAY HAVE OF REGAINING LOST
TERRITORIES, IT COULD BE ARGUED BY OURSELVES AND OTHER
LATIN COUNTRIES THAT THE CANAL AGREEMENT, AFTER ALL,
ALSO REFLECTS AN HISTORICAL CHANGE IN OUR TRADITIONAL
VIEWS.

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2. BY TAKING THE INITIATIVE TO SUGGEST A MEETING OF
THE PRESIDENTS, THE U.S. NEED NOT IN ANY WAY PROPOSE A
PARTICULAR SOLUTION OR SUPPORT ANY COUNTRY'S INTERESTS.
THE PUBLIC RATIONALE FOR THE MEETING COULD BE PUT AS
ENCOURAGING THE MAINTENANCE OF PEACE IN THE REGION AND THE
MODERATION OF ARMS PURCHASING. IF A BOLIVIAN OUTLET TO

THE SEA CONSTITUTES PART OF A LASTING RESOLUTION OF PEACE
IN THE REGION, IT WOULD BE UP TO THE BOLIVIANS TO ARGUE
THIS, AND THIS COULD BE MADE CLEAR PRIVATELY TO THE
BOLIVIANS AND THE OTHER TWO COUNTRIES.

3. THERE MAY BE RISKS TO THE U.S. GETTING INVOLVED IN
AN EFFORT TO RESOLVE THE LEGACIES OF THE WAR OF THE
PACIFIC. HOWEVER, IT HAS BEEN THE ADMINISTRATION'S
GENERAL POLICY TO ENCOURAGE PEACEFUL RESOLUTION OF SUCH
ISSUES. OBVIOUSLY THE PRESIDENTS OF PERU AND CHILE
WOULD HAVE TO FULLY CONCUR; WE DON'T THINK WE SHOULD
PRESSURE THEM INTO SUCH A MEETING. RATHER, IT COULD
SIMPLY BE A U.S. PRESIDETIAL OFFER TO THE
THREE PRESIDENTS TO HOST A MEETING ON NEUTRAL GROUND.
SUCH AN INITIATIVE MIGHT GAIN NOTHING. ON THE OTHER HAND
IT JUST MIGHT BE A STEP TOWARDS REDUCING HISTORICAL
TENSIONS IN THE REGION, AND WE FAIL TO SEE THAT ANY
POTENTIAL DAMAGE TO U.S. INTERESTS IN THE REGION OR IN
LATIN AMERICA MIGHT RESULT.
BEAL

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